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THE PRE-TALMUDIC HAGGADA.

I.

IN the April number of the JEWISH QUARTERLY REVIEW Professor Bacher gives so lucid an explanation of the term *Haggada*, that it can hardly be disputed any longer. What the מדרש is to the מקרא, the הגדה, "the telling," is to the כתיב, "the written word." It is the exemplified "telling," the facts or doctrines suggested or implied by the Scripture. Still Professor Bacher fails to accentuate sufficiently the popular character of the Haggada, in contrast to the exclusively scholastic nature of the Halacha. The latter is the legal statute,¹ based upon traditional lore and practice; whereas the former contains fanciful "tales" of all kinds, often so loosely connected with the Scripture as to allow no longer the assumption of hermeneutical rules and premises. It has become a homily of either an ethical or a poetical character. The Haggadists are often no longer interpreters of the Law, but preachers of a socialistic temper, like the old prophets. (See Derenbourg, *Palestine*, pp. 163-4, 351.) And while the Halachists, ever since the days of Hillel and Shammai—that is, as far back as our records reach—endeavour to base the legal statutes upon, or to derive them from, the Mosaic letter, the Haggadists create new "tales," with which they expand and embellish the Biblical stories, without caring for Scriptural supports. The Haggada is, at the very outset, a *paraphrase* rather than an interpretation. In

¹ הלכה is "walk," derived from הדרך ילכו בה, the road being the road of life, or of צדיקה, "righteousness." See Josephus, *Antiq.* XIII. x. 5f. ὁδὸς δίκαιη, and *Targum* to דרך *passim*. Between דרך, "the main road," and הלכה, "the single walk" lies פרק דרכים—פרק, "the cross-way," hence *chapter*. Nidda 69^b read הלכה for חכמה, which error was caused by Tossifta Negaim near the close, and not as Bacher thinks.

fact, the farther back we go in the history of Jewish literature, the more exuberant the Haggadic material becomes ; and the lines between the *Biblical* Midrash, as given in the book of Jonah and in the prophetic stories of the books of Kings and of Chronicles, where the word מדרש first occurs, and the *Rabbinical* one can hardly be clearly and sharply drawn.

The difficulty of the problem to trace the origin of the Haggada lies in the fact that the actual Haggadic embellishment and enlargement of the Bible is—exactly as the real Pharisean practice of the religious ritual handed down as “Halacha from Moses and the prophets”—by centuries older than our traditional records.

It is the purpose of this article to call the attention of scholars to a number of Midrashim that date back to the Maccabean era, and throw new light on the character of the ancient *Haggada*.

A.—THE TESTAMENTS OF THE TWELVE PATRIARCHS.

Both Bacher and Guedemann are puzzled by the ancient tradition preserved in B. Sota 7*b*, Jer. Sota I., 16*d*, and Sifra Numb. v., 19, § 12 (to which compare Makkoth 11*b*, and Sifra Deut. xxxiii. 6), according to which the high court of justice addresses the woman suspected of adultery, reciting to her—דברי הגדה מעשים שאירעו בכתובים הראשונים כגון מעשה ראובן בבלהה ומעשה יהודה בתמר אשר חכמים ויהודה, “words of the Haggada, historical facts which occur in the early writings, as the story of Reuben regarding Bilhah, and of Jehuda regarding Tamar, as it says in Job xv. 18: ‘The wise ones confess, and conceal it not; these are Reuben and Jehuda.’” Now Guedemann, in the *Zunz Jubelschrift*, 116, understands the early writings to refer to Genesis, and finds in the words of the Haggada as contrasted with the כרה references to some other tale than the Biblical one. Bacher, on the other hand, explains the earlier writings to refer to Job on account of the verse quoted therefrom. The fact is that the parenthetical words

מעשים שאירעו בכחובים הראשון, disclose to us the source whence the דברי הגדה are taken, viz., the confessions made by both Reuben and Judah, which should form a lesson and an example to the woman accused of adultery, in case she is guilty. The early writings are none other than *the Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs*.

Before examining these, their contents, and their age, let us take the Mishnaic Code, and see what kind of lesson is given to the accused woman. The president of the high court addresses her, saying, "My daughter, wine often brings great trouble. Lascivious jesting often brings great trouble. Youth often brings trouble. Bad company often brings trouble. Do make confession; for the sake of God's great name, that it may not be wiped out, after having been written in holiness." Add to this, then, the Talmudical comment: "These exhortations should be accompanied by examples illustrating the benefit of confession of the sin committed, and by Haggadic readings to the same effect." Are not we here clearly informed of the existence of an Haggadic book containing these lessons? *The Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs answer exactly this purpose*, and, only because the existence of the same was no longer known in Talmudical times, some copyists added the 'ו="and" to the word מעשים, and the meaning of the whole tradition became a puzzle to the interpreters.

The Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs have been, like numerous other Midrashim, as will be shown later on, preserved exclusively by the Church, and in form so thoroughly Christianized that the original Jewish character escaped the notice of scholars until recently, when Fr. Schnapp published his interesting little work: *Die Testamente der zwölf Patriarchen untersucht*, Halle, 1884. Yet even this able research of Schnapp has as yet failed to receive the attention of Jewish scholars, probably for the reason that his critical examination of the book is only a negative one. He shows that the Christian elements of the book are the work of a rather awkward interpolator

anxious to make the twelve Patriarchs prophesy the coming of Jesus from the tribes Judah and Levi on the father's and the mother's side; whereas the main book is the compilation of two or more Jewish writers. What Schnapp has as yet failed to do, is to bring out in clear outlines the object and tendency of the book, and to interpret it in the light of history.

This much is certain that each of the twelve sons of Jacob is represented as teaching a great life-lesson in his last will made to his own children before dying, either in the shape of a virtue strenuously practised through life or in the shape of repentance and avoidance of a vice indulged in formerly. While Joseph holds forth the lesson of chastity and purity amidst all temptations, Judah and Reuben make such confessions of their sins that the Mishnaic allusion to wine and to bad company easily finds its support there. How old the book is, and how well-known at a certain time it was, can be learned from the circumstance that it has gone through the hands of so many Jewish and Christian interpolators, which would scarcely have been the case, had it been the work of an obscure writer or class of writers. But internal evidence shows it to have been written shortly after the Maccabean wars, or, to state it more explicitly, in the time of John Hyrcanus. For he is introduced in the Testament of Levi (cap. 8) as "the one who, like Malkizedek in the time of Abraham, shall unite the crowns of royalty and of prophecy with that of the priesthood, and bring many strangers to the law." (Compare Josephus *Jewish Wars* I. iii.) But the entire warfare of the sons of Jacob with Esau (=Edom) and his allies as described in the Testament of Judah, and also in the Book of Jubilees and the Midrash Vayissau (Jellinek *B. Ham.* III.), is, to the very names of the places of the battle-fields identical with the Maccabean war (1 Macc. v. 13). Geiger (*Zeitsch.* vii. 122) finds traces of Sadducean law throughout the book. The same laws are found also in the Book of Jubilees, which must be placed at about the same time as

the Testaments, at the age of John Hyrcanus. But it is hardly correct to behold in either of these books a work of Sadducean authors. The constant reference to the heavenly tablets of Enoch, and the part taken by angels and spirits in all the earthly transactions forbid this assumption altogether. No. The *beau-ideal* of the writer of the Testaments is Issachar, the simple-hearted husbandman with his contempt for gold and lust, and his maxim: *Love for God and love for one's fellow man*; also Zebulon, the kind-hearted friend of the poor. It is not my purpose to enlarge here on the single facts, hitherto altogether overlooked. Suffice it to say that a careful investigation places the fact beyond any doubt, that the book is the work of the ancient Essenes, the *Chassidim*, "who, having the praise of God in their mouth and the two-edged sword in their hand," shaped the destiny of the Jewish people and moulded the original *Haggada* and *Halacha*, before the schools of Hillel formulated the hermeneutic rules. Owing to false literary axioms by which a work is placed as far down as *external* criteria indicate, the Palestinian Targum has been declared by centuries younger than the Babylonian, called after the fictitious Onkelos (the Greek Aquilas). The very reverse is the actual truth. The Jerusalem Targum has preserved the true type of the old Haggada. It is in fact the treasury of *Essene* tradition. It is to a great extent, as was partly recognised by Rappoport, *anti-Mishnaic*, and this implies a *pre-Mishnaic* origin. About its truly Essene character we hope to enlarge elsewhere.¹

¹ Josephus' fastidious style of presenting the Jewish systems of belief as philosophical schools has had a most harmful effect upon the correct portraiture of the Essenes. Especially did the comparison with the Pythagoreans work immense mischief among Christian writers. The Essenes—'Essenoi—are none else than the צנועים of the Talmud, those that follow the prophetic maxim הִצַּנְעוּ לִכְתּוֹם אֱלֹהִים, the modest walkers in the path of purity and holiness, the *virtuosi* or *uppermost* in their striving for sanctity among the פְּרִישִׁיָא=חֲסִידִים=Pharisees, forming no sect of their own, only representing the highest degree of holiness. Their

Yet both the Targum Jerushalmi and the Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs together with the Book of Jubilees, offer one striking feature in common. On the one hand, the Biblical heroes are represented as warlike and of gigantic strength. They are inventors of certain industries. For instance, Zebulon is "the first who makes a boat to sail on the sea" (Cf. Midrash to Genes. xlix.). So are Abraham and Moses, so are Seth, Henoch and Noah, inventors of trades, arts, and sciences in the old Haggadic works. And on the other hand, these very men are mystics who know how to use hidden powers, the secrets of God's holy name in war and peril. Whatever Midrashim of a late origin narrate in this direction, has been anticipated by the Haggada of the Hellenists, by Pseudo-Hecataeus, by the Sibylline writers, by the Book of Wisdom. Philo, Josephus, and the New Testament writers are already familiar with all the chief figures and features of the Midrashic expansion of Biblical history. The Adam and Henoch, the Noah and Abraham, the Moses and Elijah they speak of, are no longer the plain and simple Bible

retired and quiet manners, particularly in their charity, which led to a sort of communism in their קופה and תמחוי (Ps. viii.), gave them also the name of חשאים = *Essaioi*. By their constant exercise of the rites of purity and holiness in their daily life at their meals and for their prayers, they expected to be imbued with the holy spirit in order to come into close communion with God, be enabled to work miracles by using the holy name of God, and particularly to bring the מלכות שמים, "the kingdom of God," the Messianic time, near. One of their chief characteristics was their priestly purity as eaters of every meat in the utmost holiness of the priesthood: אוכלי חולין במהרת הקדש. Now here is the remarkable translation of the verse Exodus xxii. 30: ואנשי קדש תהיון לי. In Targum Jerush. : ואנשי קדישין טעמין חולין ברכותא תהון קדמי. In other words, "Be holy Essenes unto me." Again, Levit. xx. 7:— והתקדשתם והייתם קדושים; Targ.: ותהון קדישין בגופיכון "Exercise holiness on your body;" to which compare the Boraitha Berachoth, 53b:— והתקדשתם—אלו מים ראשונים—והייתם קדושים—אלו מים אחרונים— בי קדוש—זה שמן—אני יי—זה ברכה. Here we have the entire system of Essene life as described by Philo and Josephus after an original Essene guide-book.

characters. They are figures moulded after a different pattern by, and for, a different class of Bible students, nor are they products of a school like Hillel's and Akiba's.

He who created, for instance, the characters of Adam and Noah did not, as Dr. Kohut believes, simply copy the Jama or Djemshid of the Zoroastrians, but he moulded the entire cycle of the Proto-plastes after the general Mazdean conception of the world, from its beginning to its end in the millennium of Soschiosch. It is, therefore, not enough to single out a few Talmudical parallels and compare them with the Parsee original, in the fashion that Professor Graetz, the Breslau Court-historian, feels tempted to call Zoroaster the "*ape of Moses*." There are far closer relations between the Haggada of the Book of Enoch and the original Apocalyptic Book of Adam and Eve, of which the Book of Jubilees and the first Sibylline Book are the off-shoots on the one hand, and the Mazdean tradition, recorded in the Bundahish, on the other, and the resemblances become so striking as to leave no doubt as to a common (Persian or Babylonian) origin.

With regard to the characters of Henoch and Seth, again, we are led from Persian to Egyptian influences in the moulding of the same. The original inventor of letters, the divine recorder, the erector of engraved pillars, the assistant of the Deity in the judgment of the souls is the Egyptian *Thot*, and there can be no doubt that Henoch was shaped after his pattern.¹ Also his astrological and

¹ We need not, however, go as far as Egypt to find the origin of the Henoch figures, for *Nebo*, the prophet and scribe among the gods of Babylonia, occupied the same position as *Thot* in Egypt. Nebo was the recorder of both the destinies and the sins of man upon the heavenly tables (see *Tiele Assy.*, 533; *Delitzsch und Haupt Beitr.* II., '412), and the inventor of sciences. And as columns with mystic lore engraved thereon were ascribed to Seth and to Kainan in connection with the flood (*Joseph. Antiq.* I. ii., 3; *Jubilees* viii. 3), so was the Babylonian flood story found on columns (Jeremias, *Izdubar Nimrod*, p. 45). And so were columns containing profound mystic lore for the Babylonians ascribed to *Achiachar*, the wise "Haikar of Mohammedan folk-lore, the Ahiabar of

his medical or therapeutic art was derived from him. And why should Noah and his favourite son Shem, or why should Abraham, the great Chaldean sage, stand behind the great Persian, Greek, or Egyptian inventors and heroes of the past? What in the age of Euhemeristic syncretism each tribe or school claimed for its own past, the Jewish sage claimed with equal pride for his. All that was necessary was a fine creative imagination, able to invest the Biblical personages with the attributes of other heroes of hoary antiquity. Here, far more than in the scholastic efforts of Scriptural interpretation, lie the sources of the Haggada. Every new stream of culture, every new channel of wisdom disclosed to the Jew, thus becomes a tributary to enlarge the river-bed of the Midrash. Is it not remarkable, indeed, that the very first word of the oldest Midrash—*Bereshit Rabba*—alludes to the Egyptian name of the mystic deity *Amun*, “the hidden One”? Ever since the time of Alexander the Great, the Essene colonies bordering on Egypt had imported Persian, Greek and Egyptian ideas and words to a large extent into the Rabbinical Haggada, and, let me add, also Halacha.¹ To illustrate this fact by a very striking instance, I will call attention to another seemingly Christian, but, in fact, genuinely Jewish apocalypse.

Tobit xiv. 10” (see Clemens, *Stromata* I., 15). Achichathra or Xisuthros equal to Flidr, and Henoch equal to Idris, then belong to the same group of heroes known as those transferred to the land of the celestials.

¹ The whole vocabulary of the Mishna, with such strange words as $\text{טוב} = \eta \delta\omicron\varsigma$ for נשם or נשם or $\text{נשם} = \eta\mu\iota\sigma\upsilon$ for תוך , and similar ones, cannot be explained as a Palestinian dialect, still less as a literary dialect. The Mishnaic system is the code of life of a Chasidim colony, of an assembly of pious observers of the law in its utmost rigidity, who live in constant contact with new-comers, strangers, or proselytes, yet remote from the political turmoil of the State. A few strange *Halachoth* are preserved in their writings, which were afterwards dropped or forgotten : —1. *Consanguineous marriages* are recommended or enjoined as especially good and holy. Throughout the Book of Jubilees and the Book of Adam and Eve the rule is maintained that each pious man should marry the daughter of his brother (or sister). In fact, the Parsee doctrine which

B.—THE SECOND BARUCH OR RATHER THE JEREMIAH APOCALYPSE.

This book was first made known in the year 1866, when Dillmann published the Ethiopic version in his *Chrestomathy*. The Greek, original under the title "Rest of the Words of Baruch," was published in 1889 in Cambridge, by J. Rendel Harris. This book, too, has been appropriated and worked over by the Christian Church, in a manner to hide its Jewish character so successfully, that even the last editor felt inclined to ascribe it to a Jewish-

urges kin-marriage as something sacred, pervades the entire patriarchal history. In like manner we find *Judith*, the Essene woman, married to a kinsman of hers (*Judith* viii. 1f); and *the most conspicuous lesson of the Book of Tobit is neither the charity work nor the burial of the dead with which the saint occupies himself*, as has been suggested, but the rule: "Marry a woman of the seed of thy fathers. Take not a strange woman that is not of thy father's tribe for a wife, for we are the children of prophets Noah, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. Remember, my son, that our fathers from the beginning all married wives of their own kindred, and were blessed in their own children, and their seed shall inherit the land" (*Tobit* iv. 12). On this idea of kin-marriage the whole story hinges. (Compare i. 9, v. 13, vi. 12, vii. 16, x. 12, xi. 17.) 2. כסוי ערוה, "the commandment to cover the nakedness of the flesh," often mentioned as a precept conditioning prayer in the Talmud, is declared in the Book of Jubilees to be a commandment written in the tablets of heaven for Adam and Noah, and all those that want to observe the path of life (see Jubilees III., 23-27, and VII., 16, where it forms one of the seven, or ten, commandments of the Noahides). This alone ought to be sufficient testimony to the Essene character of the Book of Jubilees. 3. לעולם אל יפתח אדם לישון, Berachoth, 19a=Paul in Ephes. iv. 27: Μηδὲ διδοτε τόπον τῷ διαβόλῃ; Clement in *Hom.* XIX. 2: Μη δότε πρόφασιν τῇ πονηρῳ, "Allow not the evil one to rush in," or "Open not thy mouth to Satan." This is given as an especial command to Noah: no one should be the bearer of evil tidings. This is illustrated by the wife of Cham, who, seeing the water coming while she was standing by the oven baking bread, cried, "The word of God has become true." Then Noah said, "Then the flood hath come." Whereupon God said, "Kill not the wife of Cham, for from thy mouth hath begun the destruction." See Hippolytus, *Fragments on Genesis*—after a more complete version of the Book of Adam and Eve. These specimens of the old pre-Talmudic Halacha may suffice for the present.

Christian author of the Post-Hadrianic epoch. But the book not only betrays Haggadic knowledge and style throughout, but it is solely dictated by the Messianic hope of the Jews, and, fragmentary as it probably is, it vents its wrath upon the Samaritan race in an unmistakably national Jewish spirit, whereas the hand of the Christian interpolator betrays itself by its clumsiness. So, for instance, when the blessing given to Abedmelech (ch. v., close), "God conduct thee to the rebuilt city of Jerusalem!" is changed into the wish, entirely inappropriate for a person desirous to live: "The Lord guide thee to the UPPER Jerusalem!" or when the hope that "Zion shall rejoice at seeing the house of God restored to new life by the same miraculous power which kept the figs fresh during the sixty-six years of Abedmelech's sleep," is transformed into the hope of "resurrection for the soul that has left the house of clay." But the worst havoc was done to the closing, or rather the main, part of the book, in which Jeremiah's vision of the coming of the Messiah, with the earth and the heaven around renewed, has been so mutilated that only Jesus' name stands out intelligible amidst the hopelessly corrupt passage. Still it can easily be shown that the book was a Jewish work. The first chapters, corresponding in part literally with the other Baruch Apocalypse—which, in our opinion, is much younger than ours—relate the entrance of the destroying hosts of Nebuchadnezzar into the holy city, after the angel of God had trod upon the gate to open it for the invader, and the burning of the Temple, after four angels of God had set fire to the same, so that the heathen should not boast of having destroyed God's house. All this is told in almost identical words in the *Pesiktha Rabbathi*, ch. xxvi. Also that the prophet Jeremiah cast the keys of the Temple up to the sun, saying, "We have been unworthy guardians; keep thou the keys, until God demands them back!" is related in the Midrash there, only in place of Jeremiah, the high priest is mentioned, and elsewhere (*Jalkut*, Kings, 249)

King Jehojakin. Also the story that Jeremiah hid the sacred vessels of the Temple in some secret place in the ground, after having conjured the earth by God's holy name to open her mouth and take them, has many parallels in Rabbinical literature. (See 2 Maccabees ii. 5; *Shekalim* vii., p. 9b; *Joma*, 54; and the Samaritan tradition.)

The most interesting story, however, of the book is the sleep of Abedmelech, the Ethiopian, during sixty-six years, from the destruction of the Temple until the time when Jeremiah—not Zerubbabel and Jozadak, the high priest!—started the return of the exiles. He had rescued Jeremiah from the pit, though himself but a heathen slave of the king, and so Jeremiah asks God to spare him from the awful sight of the destruction and the fate of captivity. (See Jerem. xxxviii.—xxxix.) At the command of the Lord Jeremiah sent him with a basket of figs to the sick living “in the vineyard of Agrippa.”

This anachronistic designation of the name gives us the most welcome clue to ascertain the date of the writer, who cannot have lived long after the destruction of the second Temple, when the place still bore the name of the King Agrippa, most probably Agrippa I., whose gorgeous palace and gardens are described by Josephus (*Wars*, V. iv. 4). It seems that in the neighbourhood was the colony of the *Essenes*, as, indeed the western gate, near by Solomon's Pool, was called *the Gate of the Essenes* (see Josephus, *Wars*, V. iv. 42), and the cloister adjoining the Ophel—perhaps the שַׁעַר מִדּוֹת of Midoth (see *Aruch* Kohut מִדּוֹת) spoken of by Josephus—was probably the hall of the Essenes, לְשַׁכַּת הַחֲשָׁאִים (*Shekalim* V., 6).

On the road there Abedmelech takes shelter under a tree—it is not unlikely that, instead of the tree, the original story had a *cave*, *ἄντρον* and *δενδρον* are easily confounded together. The hot midday sun of the month of Ab had caused his exhaustion, and he falls asleep. On his awakening, on the 12th day of Nissan, sixty-six years later, he finds the world around him changed, and in his great

anxiety, he blesses God like a genuine *Chassid*, חייב אדם לברך על הרעה כשם שהוא מברך על הטובה (*Berachoth* IX., 5). But the figs in his basket remained still as fresh as when he had put them there ; and when an old man, whom he asked after Jerusalem and after Jeremiah, told him that the city had been destroyed long ago, and that Jeremiah had gone to Babylonia with his brethren to preach consolation to them in the exile, he would not believe it, until he learned that this was Nissan, when figs are not ripe, as those before him were. Baruch, too, Jeremiah's pupil, who had been all along in the neighbourhood of Hebron (?) recognizes in the miracle of Abedmelech's sleep and of the figs the pledge of God's restored favour to Jerusalem, and sends a letter to Jeremiah announcing the approaching return. The letter is sent to the exiled brethren, exactly as in the other Baruch Apocalypse, by one of the fabulous eagles of Persia—the Simurg, who serves as messenger and as a riding-bird to King Solomon in the Midrash, as it does for the kings of Persian folk-lore ; he is gifted with divine wisdom and speech, and also with the power of immortality, or resurrection. And no sooner has he reached the far-off land, where the exiled live under the guidance of the prophet Jeremiah, than he, in the sight of all, restores a dead man, at the moment he was to be buried, to new life. This is the best proof that Jerusalem will be restored to its new glory. But the letter contains a special Divine command to Jeremiah : when leading the exiled back, he should test them at the waters of the (Jordan ?) Chaboras, or Pallacopas, נהר אחרה (*Ezra* viii. 31), and separate those that have the stain of idolatry upon them through marriage with Babylonian wives ; for worshippers of foreign gods are not to be admitted to the holy city. How they should be tested is not said in our mutilated text. It is possible that the Christian reviser purposely omitted all this, and put the river Jordan in place of the Babylonian stream to suggest the rite of baptism, of which the Editor of this book, J. R. Harris, is reminded, although the people to be

excluded are quite distinctly singled out as the Samaritans, the half-heathen Jews. To solve the problem, we must look for Rabbinical analogies in the Midrash. Nor is it difficult to discover these. After the worship of the golden calf, Moses, says the Bible (Exodus xxxii. 20), gave the Israelites water mixed with the ashes of the idol to drink, and the Targum Jerushalmi explains it, better than the Talmud (*Joma* lxxxvii.): the water branded the stain of impurity upon their foreheads, and those thus marked were the three thousand killed by the Levites. In the very same manner the Midrash has Gehazi punished with the sign of leprosy upon the forehead, because he made the golden calf for King Jeroboam. And I should not be surprised if another Midrash will yet be discovered which tells us that Micha, the maker of the idol of Dan (Judges xvii. and xviii.), who, according to the Midrash was, by the help of Satanic power, the real maker of the golden calf, had this mark of leprosy on his forehead. For he is identical with the *Samiri*, or Samaritan of the *Koran*, who has for ever to go about crying out, "*Là misàs*," Touch me not! *טמא טמא יקרא*. Here now we find the connecting link. The Samaritans were again tested by Jeremiah, and by the sign of leprosy on their foreheads—as we may now surmise—which has been changed by the Christian interpolator into the sign of a seal, although only the disobedient, as we read, were marked, found to be still addicted to idolatry. Our conjecture will be corroborated, if not verified, by the final act of our story. Jeremiah, the book continues, starts from Babylonia at once, that is, on the *twelfth day of Nissan*, when Ezra started, according to the Scriptures. The failure of Zerubbabel's attempt was probably the reason why Jeremiah's name was connected with Ezra's and Nehemiah's return rather than with the former's (see 2 Mac. i.—ii.; and Sanhedrin xxxviii., where Nehemiah is identified with Zerubbabel!). Ezra arrived in Jerusalem at the beginning of the month of Ab, and after a three days' rest, he held a great festival

of thanksgiving for the Twelve Tribes of Israel, lasting TWELVE days exactly, as the Pentateuch law prescribes the dedication festival in the wilderness to last (see Ezra vii. 9; viii. 15, 35). The last of these days was the 15th of Ab, noted in the ancient tradition of the Mishnah (*Taanith* IV., close) as the great *Fire Kindling Festival*, which enjoyed the greatest popularity in Jerusalem, equalled only by the Day of Atonement; but the Talmudical authorities are at a loss to account for it. It is the summer solstice festival, celebrated also by the Syrians, and continued to remain a festival of joy until the time of Roman oppression. Naturally enough the legend about the sacred fire taken from the well by Nehemiah, where it had been placed by Jeremiah the prophet, as narrated in the Second Book of Maccabees, originated there in connection with the Fire Festival (Comp. *Taanith* 30b).

Now, our book makes Jeremiah hold a thanksgiving festival of nine days, and on the tenth—the day of the anniversary of the Temple's destruction—Jeremiah offers a prayer full of allusions to fine wood and incense, and light of the Fire-kindling Feast—but, alas! it is too mutilated to yield any coherent thought—and then he asks for his end. But when he lies already in the coma of death, mourned by the people, his soul comes back again to bring the celestial message of the coming Messiah. We shall see later on that shortly before death the soul of the saint forecasts the future, and all apocalypses are glimpses of the world beyond, espied by dying prophets.

About the corrupt and defective condition of the apocalyptic part of our book we have spoken already. We shall now also see how the story about the death of the prophet Jeremiah has undergone alterations under the hand of the Christian reviser.

The legend about Isaiah's being sawn to death by King Manasseh, is recognised as an ancient Jewish one. (See *Jebamoth* iv. 96, according to a Megillath Jochasin—Setharim "Essene Scroll.") But there is also some re-

miniscence of Jeremiah's death by the people (see *Pesiktha Rabbathi*, ch. xxvi. 38).

There existed a tradition among the martyr-sect of the Essenes, long before the rise of Christianity, perhaps soon after the martyrdom of Jose ben Yoezer (the "Razi" of the corrupt text of 2 Mac. xiv. 37 *seq.*), the "father of the (Judæi or) Chasidim," and that of Onias the Essene, that the martyr-death is the seal of true saintliness—(*Abel* therefore was revered by them as the first saint)—and consequently the prophets of Jerusalem had to die the martyr's death.¹ Accordingly our book relates that Jeremiah was anxious to commit all the secret lore regarding the end of the world to Baruch and Abedmelech, and, seeing the people bent upon stoning him to death, he told his pupils to bring him a stone, which he, by invoking the light of God's glory, made to reflect his own image, so that the stoning of his image could shield his person for awhile against the assault of the mob. Finally, when his instructions were all given, the stony image addressed the people, saying:—"O ye foolish sons of Israel! You cast stones at me, believing me to be Jeremiah, while he stands there in your midst." Instantly the people ran after the real Jeremiah, and stoned him to death. Then his pupils buried him, and placed that stone upon his tomb, calling it "the Stone of Help of Jeremiah."

Most probably the tomb of Jeremiah was at the time when the book was written—perhaps originally in Egypt, where, according to some, he was stoned—a place of pilgrimage, and therefore rendered the object of reverence and wondrous awe. Our story refers to Jerusalem as the place of his murder. But as reason for his murder the present narrator has the Jews' hatred of the very announcement of the coming Christ—a presentation of facts so utterly absurd that only the anti-Semitic malice of the Rome-courting Church could venture to give it. Nor does the falsifier of the document conceal the fact that he copied

¹ Cf. Luke xiii. 33 ff.; *Pesiktha Rabb.*, §§ 30 and 33.

the Christian Isaiah-Apocalypse, which makes Isaiah also the victim of Jewish Christ-hatred manifested seven centuries before Jesus. But he did not succeed in wiping out altogether the traces of his original. The eighth chapter closes with the following verse: "And Jeremiah sent word to them (the Samaritan seceders), saying: Repent, for the angel of justice will come and lead you back to your high place." That this threat implies some divine outburst of wrath on the great day of judgment is evident. The admonition to repent becomes significant only when such a threat is uttered, and we know from the Samaritan book of Joshua that the great "day of wrath" plays an important rôle in their world-drama as well as in the Jewish and Christian one. But the τόπος ὑψηλός "high place," leaves us in no doubt as to the whereabouts of this impending day of wrath. It is the Septuagint translation of the name *Morijah*. In other words, the prophet hints at the great punishment coming over all the heathen peoples at the final war around Jerusalem, where they, the half-heathen Jews, will share the fate of all idol-worshippers, unless they repent. Was this not a sufficient provocation of the anger of the Samaritan people? And let us see how the stony image of Jeremiah addresses the murderers: "O ye foolish sons of Israel!" This is exactly the name given to the Samaritans by the Jews in the time when the Testament of the Twelve Patriarchs and the Book of Sirach were written. See *Test. Levi* 7, and *Ecclesiasticus* i. 26, "city of fools." It is the very same spirit in which the *Book of Jubilees* and the *Targum Jerushalmi* treat the Samaritans in connection with the people of Shechem and their treatment by Simeon and Levi.

We have, then, clear proofs that our Midrash literature is far younger than these relics of an older Haggada and Halacha are, some belonging to the time of John Hyrcanus, when the hostile spirit against the Samaritans reached its pitch.

But we have not yet considered the main and most

interesting story of our book—the sixty-six years' sleep of *Abedmelech*, the Ethiopian eunuch. The Talmudical Midrash makes no mention of it, and this is undoubtedly, in the estimate of our Rabbinical scholars, sufficient cause to ridicule it, and see in it an imitation of a similar Talmudical story. Let us hear it and examine it. In *Taanith Babl.*, 23a, we are told: "Onias, the drawer of magic circles,¹ חוני המעגל, the Essene miracle-worker, saw an old man plant a carob-tree, and said to him, 'Do you expect to eat the fruit of this tree? Mark well! It will take seventy years to mature.' Whereupon the old man said: 'My fathers have planted such trees for me, so will I plant them for my children.' Onias, then, went and took his meal, and fell asleep, and slept during seventy years, while the very stones around him had in the meantime yielded moss and brushwood to conceal him from the world around. When he awoke, he asked the man whom he saw plucking the fruit, whether he was the one who had planted the tree, and he replied: 'Not I, but my grandfather planted it.' 'Then, I must have slept seventy years,' exclaimed Onias. But the she-ass, too, which he had with him, had in the meantime given birth to two generations of asses. He then went home to see whether his son was alive, and he learned that his son had died, but his grandson was living. And when in the school-house his name was mentioned, it was accompanied with the remark that the world had been far better, but when he told the people

¹ The drawing of a magic circle, ascribed also to the prophet Habakkuk, and even to Plato (see *Z. d. M. L. G.*, XXVIII., 49), and to Moses (*Aboth di R. Nathan*, ed. Schechter, p. 156), is part of the mystic practice of the Gnostics (see Dietrich *Abraxas*, 158). About this esoteric love of the Essenes the instructive work of A. Dietrich, *Abraxas*, 1891, gives interesting information. No one who has read this book will be in doubt any longer that the ספרי הכמרים, condemned as containing obnoxious heresy, are the *writings of Hermes*, in which Jewish pseudography took a prominent part, and not *Homer*, as Dr. Kohut, nor *ἱμερος*, as D. Kassel, nor *ἡμερήσια*, as Graetz proposed to read. They must have had some sacred character, or else the Mishnah's declaration, *Yadaim* at the close: ידים אין כמטמאין את ידים would be more than superfluous.

who he was, they at first would not believe him, and then treated him no longer with the wonted respect. He found himself alone, and said, 'Give me either congenial company or death,' and so God granted him the boon of death." In the Jerusalem Talmud Taanith the story is told differently: "Onias, the grandson of the well-known Onias, went, shortly before the destruction of the Temple, up the hill to look after his labourers in the field, when a mighty storm overtook him and he took shelter in a cave near by, and fell asleep, and slept for seventy years. In the meantime the old Temple was destroyed and the new one built in its stead. And when he came out of his cave again, the world was changed. He no longer knew any one, nor did the world know him. They said of him that the radiance of his countenance brightened up the whole town." In like manner all the saints in paradise have faces shining like sun, moon, and stars.

Now both Talmudical legends repeated in the Midrash *Shocher Tob* Psalm cxxvi., are certainly parallels to the story given in our book of Abedmelech, and they have the advantage of referring to men that stood very high in popular esteem, so as to offer welcome subjects for legend, while Abedmelech seems hardly known outside of the Book of Jeremiah. Still there is one feature in the Onias legend that betrays an older date or origin. In the Babylonian version there is no reason at all given for the seventy years' sleep. In the Palestinian version the seventy years' sleep points to the actual restoration of the Temple, which took place after the seventy years of the Babylonian exile, and which was held forth as encouraging hope to the Jews at the war of Bar-Cochba. Onias, the popular hero then, took in the legend the place of *another* mythical sleeper during the Babylonian exile. Have we then no means to verify the identity of the same with the Abedmelech of our story? We have.

Already the editor, J. Rendel Harris, called attention to

the Koran legend regarding Ezra and his ass, who, during the time of Jerusalem's destruction, slept a hundred years, and on his awakening took the food and drink that had remained fresh. Strange that an ass occurs in the Babylonian version of the Onias legend! But of Ezra's sleep the Rabbinical sources give no trace, nor is there any likelihood that Ezra, whose age was too well known to the Jews, was made the subject of the seventy or hundred years' sleep legend. But the Talmud has preserved a remarkable tradition which has puzzled the most learned copyists and inquirers. It reads as follows:—תשעה נכנכו בחייהם לגן עדן ואלו הן: חנוך בן ירד ואליהו (משיח) ואליעזר עבד אברהם וחירם מלך צור ועבד מלך הכוש ויונדב בן רכב בן בנו של יהודה ויעבץ ודור מלחם העוף וסרח בת אשר ויש אומרים בתיה בת פרעה. 'Nine went alive into Paradise: Henoch the son of Yared, Elijah (and the Messiah), Eliezer the servant of Abraham, Hiram the king of Tyre, Abedmelech the Ethiopian, Jonadab the son of Rechab, and Jabez the grandson of Jehuda, the generation of the bird-Murg (Phoenix), and Serach the daughter of Asher.' Others add Bithia the daughter of Pharaoh (and Joshua ben Levi). This last paragraph of the first chapter of *Massecheth Derech Eretz*—an old Essene Mishna—is repeated in the collection of quaint sayings attributed to Sirach (see Steinschneider's *Alphabetum Siracidis*, Berlin, 1858, pp. 27-28 *sqq.*). The very fact that *Henoch* is, contrary to the later Rabbinical opinions (see *Bereschith Rabb.*, § 25), extolled as immortal, evidences the antiquity of this tradition. Still more so do the names mentioned after *Elijah*. *Eliezer*, the servant of Abraham, the grandson of Ham, the son of Nimrod, or, according to another legend of the giant Og, was believed by the Essenes to have lived along with Abraham, probably as "the faithful Eckehart," also in Paradise, the Lazarus of the New Testament according to Geiger (*Zeitsch.* VI. 196 *f*). Hiram, the King of Tyre, is known throughout the entire Patristic and Rabbinical literature (see Mover's *Phœnix*. II., 338, note 40,

the *Syrian Cave of Treasures*, or the Adam book, and Midrash Jalkut to Ezekiel xxviii. 2), as a sort of Phœnician Friedrich Barbarossa, probably after an original Phœnician legend, though derived from the Cherub, or Phoenix legend of the Prophet Ezekiel, while his palace and gardens high above the sea and the land to challenge the Deity, yet finally to seal his doom—given also in the Koran legend of the gardens of Iram after the Midrash, are both old Chaldean and Jewish folklore tales.

Jonadab ben Rechab and Jabez, the grandson of Jehuda (not רבי יהודה הנשיא) (see 1 Chron. ii. 55 and iv. 9, with Targum), are the real heroes of the Essene schools, the founders and continuators of the Nazirite customs from the *earliest ages*, as may be learned from Pliny and Philo. As such they occur in the very oldest Midrash traditions in connection with the tribe of the Kenites of Jethro, etc.¹ (Comp. also Jabez as contemporary of Ezra in the I. *Baruch Apocalypse*, v. 5.)

The Midrash about the proselytism of the daughter of Pharaoh, and about the long life of Serach, the daughter of Asher, who took part in the finding of Joseph's bones, and again in David's time acted as the *אשה חכמה*, is familiar to all.² Far less so is the bird מלחם. But pseudo-Sirach has preserved the tradition which identifies it with the Phoenix, the חול of Job xxix. 18, who is mentioned also in *Bereshith Rabba* 19 as the bird who alone of all animals refused to eat of the forbidden fruit in Paradise (Cf. Jellinek *Beth Hamid.* VI., p. 12). מלחם is the Persian mercha (Si = bird; murg = the great).

Regarding Abedmelech, the Midrash (*Sifre Behaalothcha*, 99) only speaks of his kind deeds, which beautified his face

¹ Compare J. N. Weinstein, *Exile* 3; *Gesch. d. Essæer*, pp. 87-89; *Hilgenfeld Ketzern Geschichte*, p. 102, note 113, 136-139; *Zosimus Apocalypse*, quoted by James in the notes to the Apocalypse of St. Peter, p. 69; the blessed ones, the descendants of the Rechabites, the parallels to the sons of Moses in the *Targ. Jerush.* and the *Eldad Had-Dani Romance*. Finally, the Nabatheans in Diodorus xix. 94 with Pliny, *Nat. H.* v. 17.

² See Grünbaum, *D. M. L. Z.* XXXI., 299-305.

so that they called him the Ethiopian, to ward off the *mal'oglio*. But the same Midrash which insisted that Jonadab's blessing from the lips of Jeremiah secured for him immortality (see Jer. xxxv. 19), certainly had equal ground for assuming Abedmelech's immortality from Jer. xxxix. 17-18. Only a later tradition was anxious to allot this privilege to Baruch rather than to the Ethiopian, and so the two were identified, and in the end the latter altogether forgotten.

At the bottom of these legends lies the Mazdean belief in the fifteen associates of Soschiosch the Redeemer, as the first ones to rise on the resurrection day. Hence the Essene tendency to include converted heathen men and women in their list, and also the Persian bird of immortality. Was he the original riding-bird of Soschiosch, as Mohammed rides into Paradise on his *Borak*, and as Solomon-Djemschid rides on wondrous eagles? At any rate, the ass of Ezra is generously admitted into Paradise by the Mohammedans; and no less so the calf which Abraham had offered to his angelic guests, and which came to life again after the angels had eaten its flesh without breaking the bones. The same story has now been found in the far older Jewish Apocryphon, about which we shall give our opinion in a succeeding article—"The Testament of Abraham."¹

K. KOHLER.

¹ Since the above was written, I had the good fortune of discovering—through a hint thrown out by Barnes in his notes to the Testament of Abraham, p. 155—a genuine *Jewish Midrash on Job* by far anterior to Aboth di R. Nathan and the Midrash from which S. Buber's *Mayan Gannim*, Berlin, 1889, is taken, written in historical form, and in the cosmopolitan spirit of Hellenic Essenism, every feature of which—except the last line of the copyist—is Jewish. On this and other Midrashim entombed in Christian libraries and books I will speak later on.